1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

609 people kept their distance, and among them some pithy proverbs were spoken to bear upon the shortcomings of the white man. One or two of them turned to repeat to the dead what had been said, and there was great laughter. Sedefo [775] came to assure us that the dead man liked it very much. For the dead, it appeared, were especially susceptible to humor and to exceptional occasions.

764 298 About us, or edging their way toward us, were the younger men in their ceremonial dress, the toga-like cloth covering their bodies, but leaving one shoulder bared for respect, and the women in their knee-length *pangi*, or [301] cloths, hanging from the waist, and their shining brass rings reaching from wrist to elbow and from ankle halfway up to the knee. Among the dancers, but standing somewhat [534] aloof, could be seen a man or woman with seed rattles about the ankles. These were the fine dancers. Of them our informant had spoken when he said, "They dance well at Gankwe."

764 [350] 533 Carved stools were placed for us facing the coffin a little to the left of the singers, where we could best see the dancing. One or two lanterns were moved to give us better light. The drummers, who had not left their places, took up the rhythm again—one of the women had us know that the spirit of the dead man had communicated to the spirits of the drummers that he wanted to see the dancing resumed. The singing began—a woman's falsetto voice and a chorus; the hand clapping of the singers and bystanders emphasized the basic rhythm. It was slow at first, then quickened, and the dancing became more animated.

"They dance seketi," whispered our friends. "Later they will dance awasa."

764 535 The dancing was confined to a comparatively small space. It began with a barely perceptible motion of the feet of the dancers to the rhythm of the drums and the hand clapping. Then the feet began to execute figures in place, without leaving the ground, the arms hanging loosely at the side. This was continued for some time, until, arms flexed and held rigid at the elbow, and knees bent but rigid, too, the

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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A Gankwe dancer.

[Facing P. 8]

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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WHILE THE RIVER WAS HIGH

The sun stood over the sacred silk-cotton tree toward the Gankwe side of the land. Across the path leading from somewhere in the back of our shelter the parasol ants, each with its strip of green many times its size, made their way toward an unknown spot where no shelter stood, and no one trod. Like a wave the wide ribbon of green rose and fell as it crossed the ridges of the pathway. In unending numbers they came, and the lizards darting in and out of the brush swerved in the direction of the shelter to avoid the marching line, so that at our feet things moved now up, now back again.

While the men were at the landing place, one of the women who was drying rice on the high flat rocks opposite our shelter paddled over in her boat, and, passing the men with a formal greeting, walked on and stopped to talk with us. She was not a young woman. Her time for childbearing was long over, her wrinkled breasts sagged almost to her waist. The cicatrized designs which once had stood out so clearly, and in her youth had been so valued, were but faintly penciled on her face and about her breasts. Had she cared, she might have reopened the cuts, might have had ashes rubbed into them to make the keloids stand out black and alive against the dark brown of her skin. But what need had a woman her age to care? What need to urge life into symbols of fertility on face and between breasts and about her navel, when her time for fruitfulness was over? Of what use to reanimate the incised scrolls between her thighs, when the legend they told in terms of reproduction was for her a dead legend?

She came toward us slowly, balancing a bottle on her head. A faded cloth covered her from waist to knee, and at her waist a bit of the kerchief necessary to the attire of the married woman, even at work, could be seen. She wore a few beads on a cord about her neck, but she had no other ornaments, for ornaments were for festive occasions, and the cloth tied about the neck and worn cape fashion was for women who had children to carry straddling their backs, and woven garters below the knee were conceits of the young.

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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gods do not come to them." There was in her voice contempt for women who had no gods. She was of a reddish-brown color, taller and more slender than most, and the great coils of brass about her arms and ankles told that her beauty had had full recognition. These had come to her at marriage, as had the small earrings of gold which the bassia had brought to her from French Guiana. With these, too, had come cloths and handkerchiefs, beads and carvings.

If white women had no gods, did they know any of the other things which women must know? Did the white woman wear an apron underneath all her cloths, as women should? Were her thighs cicatrized? Did she cook for her husband, or other men, when she should be isolated in the special house provided for women's monthly visits? Did she purify herself with sacred clay when she emerged from isolation in order not to spoil her husband's obias, for which contact with a woman who has her menses is the deadliest taboo? Why, having borne children, did her figure not show it?

"Have you drums?" the bassia's wife asked. "Without drums, how do you pray? How do you dance?"

Dancing without drums availed nothing.

"White women have no gods. The gods do not come to them. They are not troubled by the need to dance. White women do not pray," she concluded, seeing that what dancing the white woman did could only be a feeble affair.

"I will send my son to your country. The men who go to the French shore say it is good to know how to count the white man's way. My woman-child I will never send," she finished with finality.

Now it was the white woman's turn to ask a few questions, having done explaining how her boots laced, and why it was that she was dressed very much as her husband was dressed.

The white clay in the hair and on the face of a small child was medicine. The child's mother had washed for her god that morning. He was a god whose day for dancing was Wednesday, and now, feeling the god stir in her, she would

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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A NIGHT AT S'EI

A girl of ten or eleven led the chorus. She had a string about her waist, and the strip of cloth that was tied about her neck as a ceremonial garment hung down cape fashion. About her navel and on her face the cicatrized patterns had been completed. Her voice was the shrill voice of a child, and the answering chorus was as shrill.

"Chaka, chaka!" called the bassia who was directing the dance. He was demanding those movements which bring into play the muscles of the hips.

The women waited. They had come in all their finery, their tunics of the newest cloth, their coils of brass bracelets and anklets made to gleam by rubbing with sand, their skins dark and glistening with the oil rubbed into them for the ceremonial occasion. Those whose hair was worn in braids had redressed it that day. About their necks were beads. Their cloths were fastened tightly about them, so that their figures showed plainly.

The men, also in their best, waited with them. The iron Kromanti obias on their upper arms fitted tightly, and showed the great muscles above and below them. Those who wore beads had two or three strands of yellow and red intertwined, the small beads worn by men, small almost as okra seeds. One or two wore love obias—cowrie shells sewed on a band of white cotton, and then dipped into water which was thickened with white clay. One or two wore a small black bell-shaped obia—half the size of their thumbs—on a black string, and with swagger had swung it about so that it hung at the back. There were obias below the knee, and obias which were great brass rings for the big toe of the right foot. But one or two of the old men, and the young man who was in training for an obia man, wore a jaguar tooth on a string of native twining.

Drums . . . drums. Would there be drums?

The word was whispered from one to the other, and passed like a wave over the waiting figures.

But there would be no drums. This was the day when two gods might come. The god of the ant hill, for which men and women might dance, and the buzzard god of the men's Kromanti society.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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which went on, so that she might recount it to her father. The women of the village walked "softly" with this older daughter. "Daughter of the G'aman," they called her when they addressed her, and her mildly spoken, persuasive suggestions were never ignored.

Wilhelmina, however, busied herself at her work, and if anything were asked of her, she would look up with an expression of bewilderment. Differing from other women of the village, who had come to live there after marriage and knew the speech of the less aristocratic down-river settlements, Wilhelmina had never been any distance from Asindopo Lantiwe. The other women were, therefore, constantly interpreting the questions which were being put to her.

She was dark of skin, as dark as her sister, but her face had a flush of red in it, as though she had brushed it with the sacred red kuswe. A little above her wrists gleamed wide bands of tin. These were bracelets her husband had made for her, and they were much prized. The brass coils which she once wore had been filed through and removed, for when the ankles of a woman who bore children swelled, it became necessary to be rid of these ornaments.

In a small mortar, decorated with carvings, she was pounding maripa nuts. The ends of the pestle were bordered with finely cut cross hatchings.

"Ai, we use much palm oil here," she said.

Her mother was paring cassava. At her feet were several baskets and pieces of bark, shaped like miniature canoes, into which she threw the peeled cassava. Near these containers lay a sifter, woven of palm fiber, and a grater, made of a thin board perhaps sixteen inches long and half as wide, into which long slender nails had been hammered and their points filed to a needle-like sharpness. When the tubers were peeled, Wilhelmina began the grating, first squatting down, then dropping to her knees, better to work. The grated cassava was then packed into the matapi, the cassava press which had before leaned against the house. This matapi was of a basket-like weave, golden in color

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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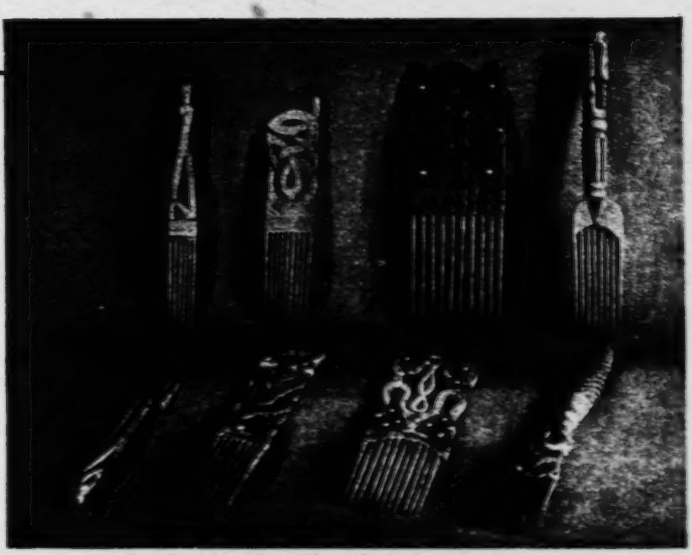

Combs, the gifts of men to women.

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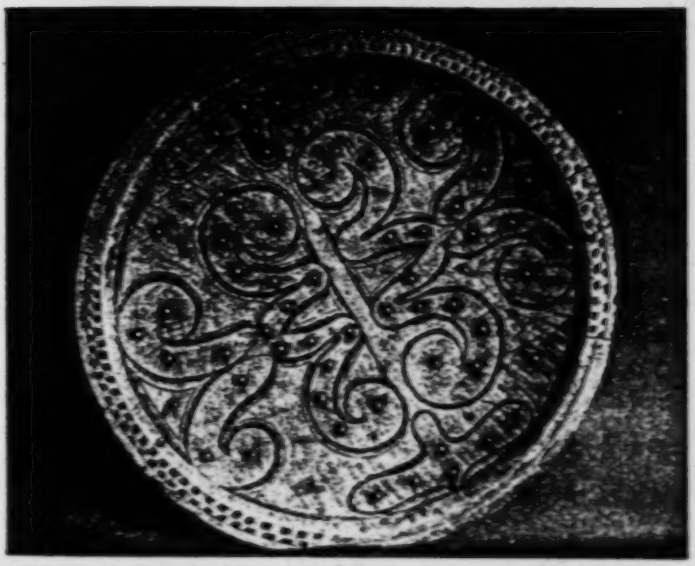

A tray for winnowing rice. (Symbolism on pages 282–283.)

[Facing p. 214]

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Saramacca

"It hurts, doesn't it?"

"*Ma kye!* It is beautiful. The men like it too much," said the girls in a chorus, laughing at the suggestion that the pain of the cuts would deter them from having them made.

Sometimes, of course, the older girl admitted, the wounds did become ugly. There was the girl from Godo, whose suitor had kept bringing her more gifts because she was growing handsomer and handsomer. She was all but ready for marrying, when one of her thighs became infected after the cuts. The wounds were so ugly that she could not even wear the tunics of the grown girl. The family was sacrificing to all the spirits of the earth, begging them to heal the wounds.

7

These days there were many visitors in the Granman's village. There was the girl the Granman had summoned to dance for his guests. She had, perhaps, that very summer got her cloths, and her reputation as the best dancer on the river had won for her a suitor who gave her many armlets and anklets. Her voice was fresh and flutelike in quality, and so fine that when she sang she placed a folded cloth over her mouth, or danced with her head low. This was the way of modesty before people, and humility before the gods.

The women said, "Her spirits dance well," when they watched her.

There was the large girl from a village down river who came almost daily. She had the body of a woman, yet she went about unclothed, and sometimes she appeared only with a string about her waist.

"She is ready for *pangi*—cloths—ai," the women said, "but her people do not want to give them to her yet."

They would not explain, however, why the attire of a grown woman was denied her. We could only conjecture about it. Perhaps she had no suitor. The man to whom she had been promised might have died. There might be other reasons.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

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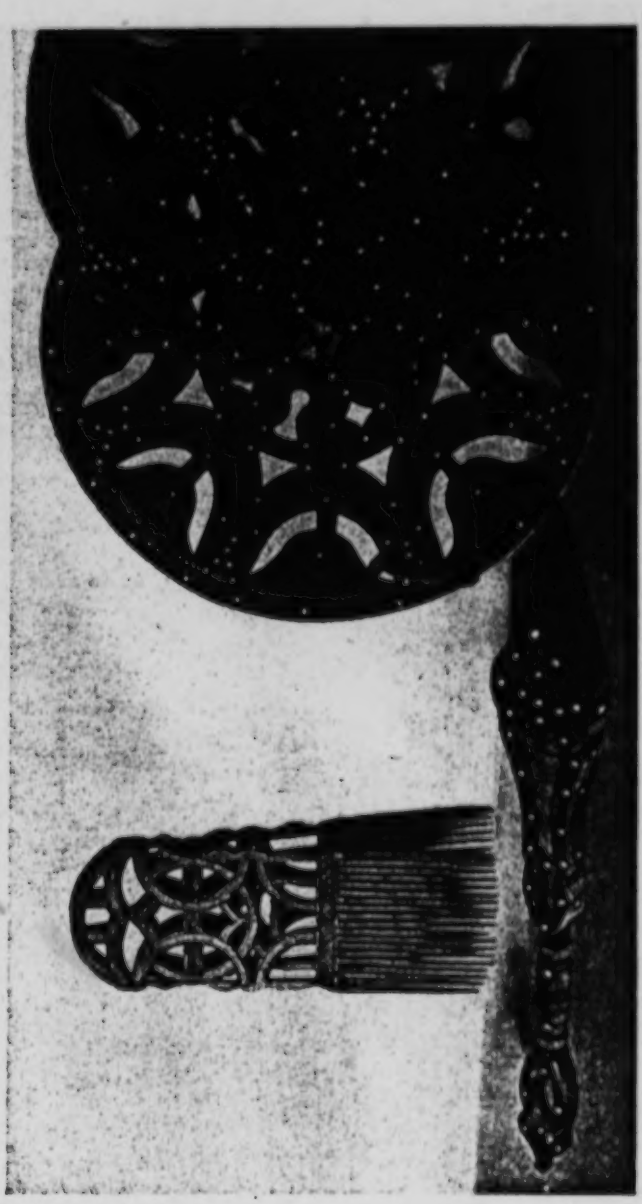

Carvings the women were eager to have admired: comb; clothes beater; tray.

[Facing P. 239]

1tHerskovits & Herskovits E-6 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

531 The greater part of these carvings men made for women,
431 and it was a rare woman who did not take pride in the excellence of the carvings given her, though often it must have been the pride in something which had traditional value, for it would be false to assume that among any people are all men equally endowed with creativeness and all women with sensitive appreciation of what is created.

462 As among so many peoples, two or three types of art
530 were to be found. There was the same sex division in the
302 art of these people as existed in all other aspects of life, and the men were the wood carvers. The sharpest division in the art of the men was that between the secular and the religious. The religious art was crude. A block of wood, roughly shaped, with several cuts to indicate a face, perhaps a break in the line to represent the neck, and a few more strokes in the wood to differentiate the upper part of the woman's body, and there stood an ancestral image, or a village god. Often white clay was added to this, and sometimes alternate stripes of white and red, or white, red, and black, but when seen on a village path underneath a low open shelter, what color there once was had become
[118] weathered to a dull gray. The sacred art also included the
[189] charms called obias, worn on the neck, and about the upper
[301] arm, or wrist, or below the knee, or at the ankle. Many of these made pleasing ornaments. The white fiber dipped in red clay became a deep golden brown as the sun paled the crimson, and there would be the added color of a finger's length of blue and orange parrot feather, fastened inside the woven fiber square, and extending below the fringe of the weave. Into this woven square cowries might be sewn, two facing each other, or three, or four.

532 There was also the art of modeling, but this was so secret and so specialized that we were assured that not even all Bush Negroes knew of its existence, and modeled objects appeared only in the most important of the shrines.

With the religious art might also perhaps be grouped the red and white striped crooked sticks of the Kromanti

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

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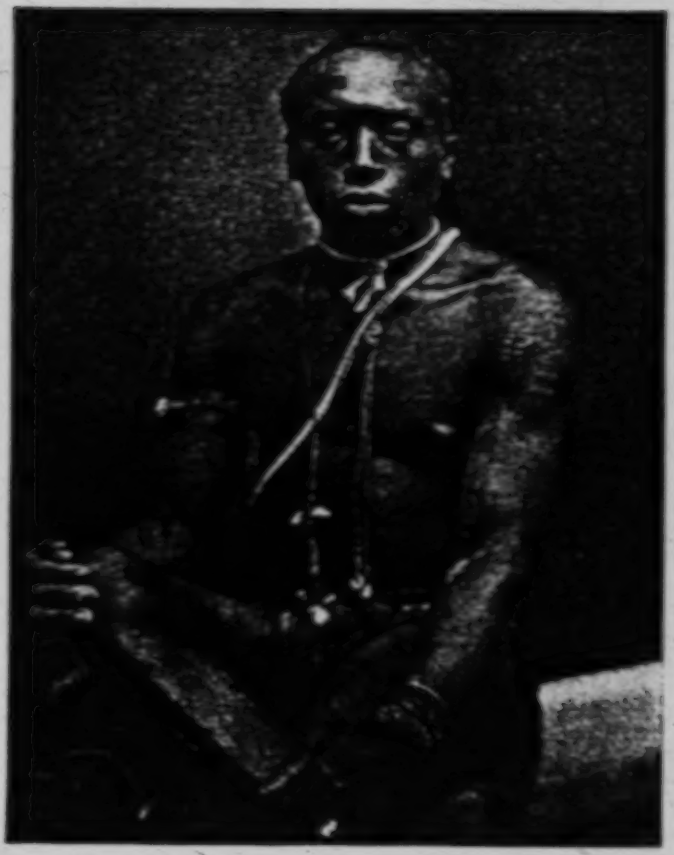

A Typical Bush Negro of the Aucaner Tribe, Lower Cottica River, Dutch Guiana. Note scar tissue decoration on arm.

Photo by Klein

[Facing p. 16]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Aucaner

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Aucaner Woman and Children. Upper Comotibo River, Dutch Guiana.

[Facing p. 24]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

monest is a simple piece of cloth wrapped around the torso from the breast to the knee. Sometimes the breasts are left bare; sometimes they are covered. This is a matter of individual taste, and has no ceremonial significance. Over this lower garment another cloth is sometimes thrown, and clasped at the shoulder. Near the mission stations, of course, and on visits to Paramaribo, much more clothing is used.

The Bush Negroes are not allowed to appear in loin-cloths on the street when they come down to visit Paramaribo, except on the river's side where they land in their canoes. They must have a pair of trousers for any further promenading. There is no objection to the upper parts of the man's body being bared; but the women may not walk about the streets of the capital with their breasts exposed.

If a Bush Negro is not fortunate enough to own a pair of trousers, he may rent one for ten Dutch cents a day (four cents in American money) from small shopkeepers who have their stores near the bank of the river. The traded cloth is fashioned into rough but brilliant trousers for the men, and crude bodices for the women. Even a straw hat may occasionally be seen. In the more remote villages, on the other hand, the women often wear only a short bit of cloth before their genitalia. Most of the children of both sexes wear no clothing until a few years before puberty. About the age of ten they are dressed in their first cloths. For the boy this is a ceremonial occasion, but the girls quietly begin clothing themselves without notice being taken of the event.

In addition to these garments, the Bush Negro indulges in

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

301 his much-loved ornamentation. Leg-bands of cotton cloth are frequently worn by both sexes, and where wire can be secured it is fashioned into arm or leg coils and paraded proudly.
731 Many necklaces and bracelets are used because they con-
778 stitute magic amulets against evil spirits. Our own bracelets and necklaces can probably be traced back to this same origin.
302 The hair is another means of personal decoration, and therefore it is always dressed with deliberation. Carefully made partings divide the black skull into geometrical designs.
534 Despite the scanty nature of their clothing, the Djukas are quite modest, and never expose themselves. If a bahkra does, they avert their heads. It is a curious reflection on civilized morality that the almost naked blacks possess a large amount of dignified restraint, while the uncomfortably clothed white man is shameless in his nudity.

322 Here and there inside the dark huts can be seen bits of ex-
531 traordinary wood carving. These are not crude utensils; every stirring-paddle or comb is a work of art worthy of a place in a museum, designed and executed in a way that is
437 far from "primitive." The only way to acquire these objects is to bargain for them in Dutch money or tobacco, or cheap knick-knacks. Among the more distant villages money is use-

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930)1931
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Bush Negro Man of the Lower Saramacca River.

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2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Bush Negro Men Visiting Paramaribo, the Capitol of Dutch Guiana.

Photo by Klein

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2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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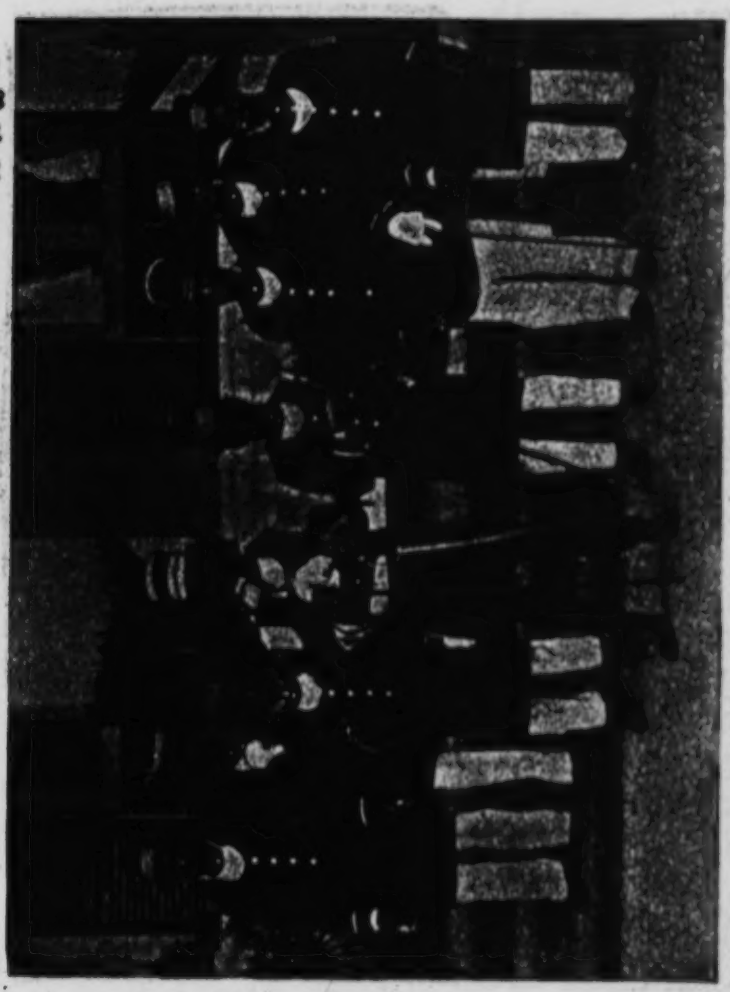

Granmans and Captains Assembled in Paramaribo for a Council with the Governor of Dutch Guiana.
Photo by Curiel

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Jankoeso, Granman or King of the Saramaccaner Tribe, in Town for a Parley with the Governor.
Photo by Curiel

[Facing p. 106]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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An Aid to Busy Mothers.

[Facing p. 108]

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Bush Negroes of the Saramaccaner Tribe, Upper Surinam River.
Photo by Klein

[Facing p. 110]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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A Bush Negro Mother on the Lower Saramacca River.

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2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Bush Negro Women of the Saramaccaner Tribe.
Photo by Klein

[Facing p. 122]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Bush Negro Man and Women of the Aucaner Tribe from the Tapanahoni River, Dutch Guiana. Note scar tissue decoration on face and chest of woman at left. The central figure is "Moi-Man" (Nice Fellow), one of Dr. Kahn's guides.

[Facing p. 128]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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A Bush Negro Woman of the Boni Tribe with a Carved Wooden Flail Used Instead of a Wringer, for Cloth. The right hand holds a tin containing an infusion of tobacco leaf and water.

[Facing p. 156]

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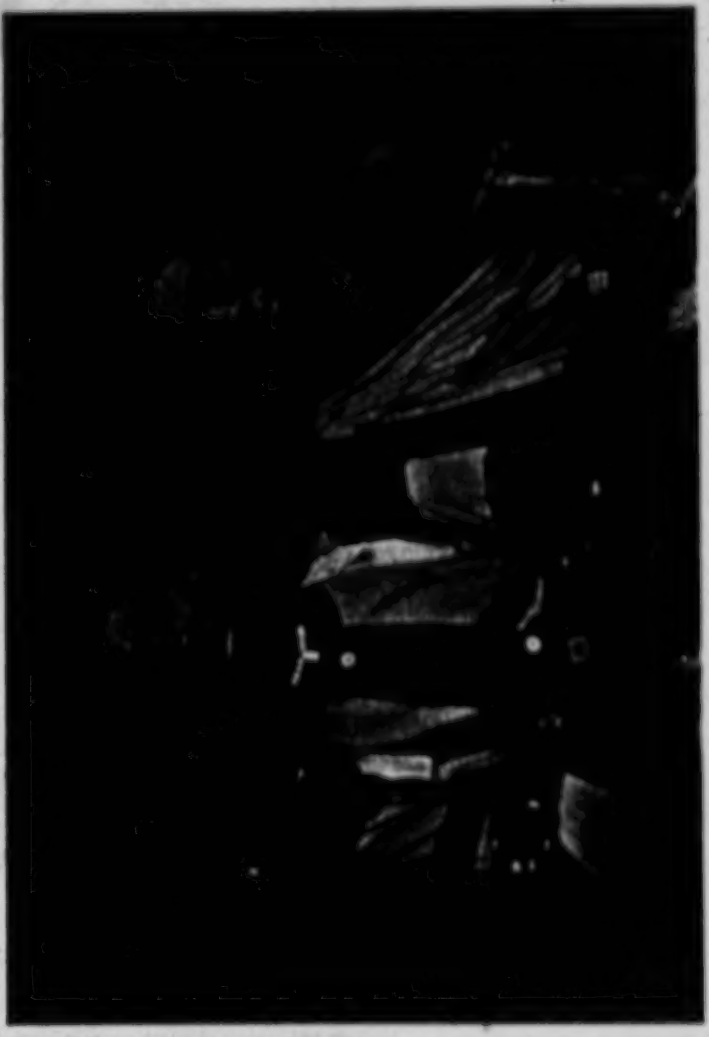

Bush Negro Men of the Ancaner Tribe, Note scar tissue decoration on faces. Cassia River, Dutch Guiana.
Photo by Kiss

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2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

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"Cow Fie" (Cow Fly), Six Feet Tall, and "Moi-Man" (Nice Fellow).
Two Expert Canoemen from the Upper Tapanahoni River.
Aucaner Tribe.

[Facing p. 166]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

190 The decoration of
177 objects with cowrie shells comes by way of Africa. The
[324] monkey dance said to be practised by the Djukas is described
[716] as similar to the gorilla dance of the West Coast. The coiled
wire bracelets and anklets are of African design, and the
[301 291] general mode of dress is the same.

The Djuka attitude toward the silk-cotton tree is common among the tribes of the Guinea Coast. "Throughout West
[824] Africa from Senegal to the Niger the silk-cotton tree is regarded with reverence and believed to be the abode of a god or spirit. This general consensus of opinion is no doubt due to the stupendous size attained by some of these trees, which tower far above all others of the forest."

[524] *Adji-boto*, a game in which seeds are placed in round holes in a board, is played not only by the Bush Negroes but also by the Town Negroes of Paramaribo; it is found along the Gold Coast, Benin, Sierra Leone, West Sudan, and, in modified forms, in many other parts of Africa. The fish spear
[227] of the Djukas is found in Liberia, Mandingo, and the Gold Coast. Shooting fish with a bow and arrow is an African
[224] custom, but it is also widespread among the aboriginal Indians of South America. On the other hand, according to Dr. W. Roth of Demerara, a number of traps and hunting devices now used by the Guiana Indians are of African origin and have been borrowed from the Negroes.

[378] The Djuka fire fan, woven of split rattan, is borrowed from the Arawak Indians, but different types of the same device can be found also among the Tshi- and Ewe-speaking people and in Liberia, Cameroons, etc. The Bush Negro

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

As one woman said: "He gave me this piece when we were first married. I won't part with it now." Usually an elaborate parley is necessary. The women are undecided whether to sell or not. They laugh, giggle, put their finger coyly in their mouths, joke bashfully with bystanders, and cannot make up their minds as to the price. They never know how much to ask for a piece. Sometimes they will mention a preposterous figure, hoping like a naïve child that the strange bahkra will pay that much. But on such occasions a rebuke will make them more reasonable. Once an arrogant witch doctor intervened in a transaction with a Bush Negro woman, demanding angrily that she receive an exorbitant payment. His anger was squelched with a few sharp words, and, contrite, he sat up all night to carve an ornate implement to present to the bahkra as a peace-offering. Cunning Adjobo, the medicine man!

The Bush Negro implements are carved out of jungle wood. Some are made of lignum vitæ, the hardest wood known. A few of them are made of soft wood, light and spongy, but these are not popular. The small paddles are used for stirring in the cooking pots, and the combs are actually used for the hair. They are never worn as personal ornaments, and when not in use are hung up on the walls of the hut. The utensils are all made with common trade jackknives and compasses which are used as dividers. It is principally with these dividers that the serpentine motifs are executed. After the carving is finished the piece is smoothed off by rubbing it with matted grass and river

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/Frontispiece/

Bush Negroes in the Colony of Surinam

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534 holds out the longest and is the fastest and most accurate performer
535 of the specific steps for this is cheered as the winner.

Banja or baljaar is one of the true African dances. This name is also given to the African guitar, a musical instrument formerly generally known in the colony, but now totally vanished. This dance is performed to the beat of the two drums and the
[224] kwakwa stool. For this dance the women provide themselves with a saka-saka, a toy having the shape of a great rattle and made from a calabash filled with corals or pits of the Canna indica and Canna lutea, also called viengoe by them. They turn and shake this saka-saka according to the beat of the song taken up by them, which produces a peculiarly strange sound.

Chapter XIX

Clothing, Ornaments, Tattooing

291 Their clothing is very simple. The women ordinarily wear merely a piece of colored linen or cotton strip, called bont, two ells long and one and a quarter ells wide. They wrap this around their middle and allow it to hang down below the knee joints, calling it pangi. This undergarment of the Negro women is thus named
•301] after pano (Spanish) and pagne (French). As a rule they have the upper body bare, while around the neck, the wrists, and the ankles
302 they wear strings of coral, which greatly take their fancy. They usually plait the head hair into a large number of small braids and bind the ends of these with white cotton threads. Some of them wear their hair combed out, as a result of which their heads,
301 seen from a distance, resemble large mop-heads. They are very fond of blood corals, which are greatly valued among them for ornamentation.

[292] When they celebrate a festival, they also wear a large number of colored cloths of cotton or muslin around the neck, and further adorn themselves with copper and iron rings around the wrists, among which there are strings of coral in the same manner

/27 cont./

301 as the European girl wears her bracelets. On their fingers they wear a number of copper rings, sometimes doubtless up to ten; the thumb is likewise generally decorated with them.

291 /28/ As a rule the men content themselves with merely
292 a simple loincloth or belt, but if they go so far as to dress up, then they wear a broad-brimmed hat which is usually painted with various colors; around the crown they wear a wide band whose ends hang far down over the brim.

301 Around their necks they frequently wear a string of tiger's
237 teeth and the incisors and molars of wild pigs (the pakier and piengo) and of other animal species that they have caught on the hunt; they wear these same ornaments hanging from a broad band under the knee, and to them is added now and then a shell, a piece of copper, iron, lead, and so forth. Their ornaments also include parrot and West Indian raven (1) feathers and small tassels

1. Lafroe, Psittacus macao L.

made of cotton.

301. They call the last-named obias (2). Just like the women,
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2. Obia, charm. The same efficacious powers as the superstition sees in amulets and talismans are seen in this.

they wear colored cloths around the neck.

304 Like almost all tropical and African peoples, they tattoo themselves. Men, women, and children undergo this operation, and although they are set upon having this as ornamentation, they nonetheless look down upon the man decorated with many tattoos just as the European does on an effeminate dandy. There are among them those whose face and body are virtually covered with the incisions, but they are looked upon with contempt by the industrious and those most developed spiritually. They say that the former are too attached to luxury and must be lazy to waste

6:Hura...--Ga K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

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Fig. 1. Boni type.

c:Hurault--342a K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

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Fig. 26. Woman possessed by a Papa gadu god.

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Fig. 27. Dance of possession (Papa gadu worship).